

## COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

**August 10, 2004**

Chairman O'Neil called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen O'Neil, Shea, Garrity, Smith and Lopez

Messrs: R. MacKenzie, K. Sheppard, F. Thomas, D. Anctil, H. Closson,  
R. Johnson

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 3 of the agenda:

Communication from Alderman Osborne asking the Board to request the Committee on CIP to look at the possibility of earmarking \$300,000 each year over and above the \$550,000 for resurfacing streets and an additional \$200,000 annually for sidewalks where needed.

Chairman O'Neil stated there is a communication attached from the Public Works Director.

Alderman Shea stated Alderman Osborne is here.

Alderman Osborne stated all I am asking for from the Committee is what it says here - \$300,000 added to the \$550,000 funded from registration. I guess my letter that you probably read is self-explanatory. Would you like me to read it again?

Chairman O'Neil responded no.

Alderman Osborne stated I know it can't be done this year. I think we can look at next year. I would like to see it taken out of the general fund. I don't like to see double dipping or anything else. I would like to see it taken out of the general fund. I think it is well overdue and I think we can look into it for 2005 if we get an okay from the Committee to go to the full Board with it for the next budget.

Alderman Lopez stated there was a lot of discussion with Frank Thomas about this at the Board level two years ago. We talked about RSA 261:153, which the full Board okayed to collected up to \$5 per vehicle. One of the main drifts of this is we approved it to go to the state to try to change the law because everybody uses the roads, not just the homeowners. Everybody who has a car uses the road and in that discussion if the City were allowed to charge it would generate \$950,000 for paving. The City has 400 miles of roadways and they should be paved every 20 years. \$950,000 would allow 15 miles of paving a year or 400 miles in 26 years. I concur with Alderman Osborne in saying that we should put \$300,000 more into the budget but I don't think we can make a decision on that at this time. I think we can look at it and present it to the Mayor that if there is a way to do it, that is fine. I think in either case I know that some of the Representatives are trying to make an amendment this year because in researching the action that the Board took the individuals that received it, which were a couple of Representatives from District 40 and District 42 and they failed to make the presentation to the state in order to change the amendment to the law. This year it is being presented again by a couple of individuals to try to amend the law up there to collect up to \$10, and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen will make that decision. Right now it is \$5. That is one way we can get money for our roads. There has to be other ways to find revenue to maintain our roads and this discussion took place a few years ago between Frank Thomas and myself because I entertained some questions on it and looked at the state statutes. I am not saying anything about the correspondence that the Alderman brought forward because I think we all agree that we need to find more funds someplace in order to take care of the roads and sidewalks in the City of Manchester.

Alderman Osborne stated I would like to rebut that a little bit. I talked about that maybe three years ago to the Alderman At-Large, Mr. Lopez on the particular thing he is talking about. I don't want to go that avenue. I think my letter is self-explanatory. Back 20 years ago we used to take \$800,000 to \$900,000 out of the general fund. We didn't go looking for extra taxes or double dipping so this is why I wanted to try and stay away from that. I don't see why we can't find \$300,000 out of the general fund when we are spending so much money on so many other things. We are buying all kinds of land and everything else and yet our infrastructure is falling apart out there. Something has to be done here. Hello. I have to say that too many times but this is the thing. I am looking for \$300,000 and maybe the sidewalks can be done in 2006 but at least for the streets let's get going with \$300,000. There is no need to double dip and go to the state and add more taxes to the registration. There is no need for that.

Mr. Robert MacKenzie stated I did want to note that the staff is working to bring to the Committee kind of a look at the multi-year needs of the City for the capital programs. Sam Maranto has been working on that and probably in the next two

months we will bring it there. One of the things we did recognize and certainly Alderman Osborne's letter recognizing that is that there is a need for additional reconstruction, street resurfacing and sidewalks. As you may remember, the fiscal year conversion will expire this year and the Board will have an opportunity to set aside some of that money, perhaps \$1 million cash, and we think that could be included in this multi-year program. I think that is one good opportunity for the Committee and the Board to look at for more improvements next year.

Alderman Smith stated I was going to ask the CIP Committee and Bob MacKenzie to look into it to see about the availability of funds and to also recommend to the Mayor and ourselves the need for street improvements.

Alderman Shea stated I did note that any time a budgetary consideration is made...for instance if the Highway Department's budget were increased by \$300,000 and if this money wasn't specifically earmarked for roads...obviously if they had a bad winter they would have to utilize some of this particular money for plowing and things of that nature that are a necessity during the winter months. So, if we were to do anything in terms of adding any money it has to be specifically directed towards that. Not that I am against directing it but it can't be utilized in the event that like right now where the budget has been cut back 2% it can't be utilized for other needs that they might have if, in fact, we wanted to do that. That is just a comment that I wanted to make.

Chairman O'Neil stated just a comment from me. I think that moving forward on the paving is a great idea. I also will note that I had a conversation with Kevin Sheppard maybe two weeks ago and the money for the 50/50 sidewalk program was already gone or committed for the year so I think Alderman Osborne's point about sidewalks needs to be included in those discussions. Would the recommendation be to refer this to staff although they already have it and hopefully they are going to come back with a recommendation sooner than 2005 for us?

On motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Shea it was voted to refer this issue to staff to come back with recommendation at a later date.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 4 of the agenda:

Communication from the Director of Planning and Community Development, on behalf of Alderman Garrity, advising that signage be installed at Brown Mitchell Park at an estimated cost of \$5,200.

Alderman Garrity asked can I get an update from Mr. MacKenzie.

Mr. MacKenzie answered we have not identified as of today any additional monies for that. We did speak with the Parks & Recreation Department to see if there might be enough contingency within the Brown Mitchell project to do it. There is a little bit of contingency but I suspect it is going to be tight at this point so we couldn't guarantee that. The only other option we had considered was taking it out of the general contingency of the City.

Alderman Garrity stated it is a time sensitive issue because the dedication has been planned for October 8 before Alderman Pariseau heads south. I would like to see if we could take it out of contingency and poll the Board.

On motion of Alderman Garrity, duly seconded by Alderman Shea it was voted recommend transfer of \$5,200 from contingency to pay for signage for the Brown Mitchell Park.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 5 of the agenda:

Presentation of preliminary plan of a proposed parking lot to be located at Derryfield Park.

Mr. Kevin Sheppard stated we asked to come before the Committee due to the fact that as a lot of Committee members realize we have run out of areas to tow vehicles during our snow emergencies. In the past we have used areas such as the South Commercial Street lot, the Rubenstein lot and we even tried the Arms lot last year, which was not too successful. As part of the FY05 CIP process, the CIP Committee approved \$200,000 to allow us to develop an intown lot and look at parking in the City to assist us during our snow emergencies. The \$200,000 was based on building a parking lot up at Derryfield Park. That is the second plan in the packet. On that plan what is shaded in yellow is actually a reduced area but you can see a grade area off the side of that. That has 375 spaces. One of the problems we ran into with that is there was a wetlands impact. We met with the Conservation Commission out at the site and took a look at what would need to be permitted and we feel that without the support of the Conservation Commission in going to the State Wetlands Board we wouldn't be able to have that parking lot in place for this winter. So, we need to take a look at other spots in the City for parking. We have come to the conclusion that there is no enough room in one lot in the City for all of those vehicles. We looked at the West Side and the East Side as separate areas of the City for impound car parking. I just wanted to explain real quick what an impound lot is. An impound lot allows us to tow vehicles during a snow emergency five to seven times a year. The vehicles are towed there during the night from 11 PM until maybe 6 AM. Typically they are picked up during the next day and if not they are towed off that lot by the following morning. We are talking five to seven times a year these vehicles will be towed in there and they

will be gone within 24 to 30 hours. We didn't feel that Derryfield Park or the larger parking lot at Derryfield Park would work out. Like I said we took a look at the West Side. One area that we looked at and discussed with the Parks & Recreation Department is the West Side Arena. The third plan in actually shows the West Side Arena. We would be proposing building a parking lot behind the West Side Arena, expanding the parking a little bit and cutting down some of the trees but there would be minimal impact to the area. We would increase the parking lot size to about 129 to 150 parking spots. What we would like to see is that being used as our West side impound area during a snow emergency. We discussed this with Parks & Recreation. I have discussed this with the Aldermen and we feel this is the best spot on the West Side for an impound area. It is something that we are going to have to try. There is hockey there during the winter. We will work with the Parks & Recreation Department and with the Aldermen to make a lot like this work. For the East Side we looked at JFK Coliseum, Livingston Park...you can see the list there. Our recommended site would be Derryfield Park but a reduced Derryfield Park, which is that yellow area show on the plan. The yellow area is a quick access to the downtown for anyone that gets towed. There are no wetlands impacts. There is some tree cutting that is involved but again we talked to the Parks Department and they agreed that a parking lot like this could work at Derryfield Park. There is needed parking in that area and Parks is also looking at in the future if there is a need for additional recreation space this is asphalt that could be removed and made into additional recreation space. The spreadsheet that was given out shows you the areas that we did take a look at. We have actually taken a look at quite a few more than this but the other areas just weren't reasonable for an impound lot. We are looking to get some direction from this Committee to move forward on this for a couple of reasons. One of the reasons being that the Police need to go out to bid for towing. Right now they go out to bid for one impound lot for the towing operation. If we need to move forward with two they are going to have to add that into their bid and it will be an additional cost for the towing operations. The second reason being we need to get this under construction to have it ready for this upcoming winter.

Chairman O'Neil asked just for clarification what you are recommending is Derryfield for up to 197 spaces and the West Side Arena from 129-150 spaces.

Mr. Sheppard answered correct.

Alderman Shea asked is this a one time expense on the part of the City. In other words the \$30,000 and the \$110,000? There are no other extenuating situations like next year this wouldn't have to come back again for additional funding?

Mr. Sheppard answered no. Once these are constructed they would be done and in the winter we would assist with plowing.

Alderman Shea asked and you said that \$200,000 was set aside for this particular...

Mr. Sheppard interjected yes and the cost that were put together for these aren't based on an actual survey. We could tighten up the cost a little bit more but \$200,000 was approved for it as part of a bond.

Alderman Garrity asked you said there is going to be an added cost for towing and things like that. Do you have any idea where you are going to get that money?

Mr. Sheppard answered we have talked to the Police Department about when they put out their bid the need to essentially put out the bid to have two impound lots or two areas and we probably won't know the impact until they do receive their bids.

Alderman Garrity asked could the increased costs go into the cost of the tickets. Is that something the City can do?

Mr. Sheppard answered the ticket rates I believe were \$85 at one time and actually the Board reduced that to \$75. If there is an increased cost that is something that could be done.

Alderman Garrity asked to increase the cost of that ticket that would probably need Board approval I assume.

Chairman O'Neil answered yes. Do you want to take that as a separate motion?

Alderman Garrity asked do you know what the costs are going to be right now.

Mr. Sheppard answered I don't.

Alderman Garrity stated we could always do that later.

Chairman O'Neil stated I think we need to send a message to Police that that needs to be considered as part of the bid package for towing. Why don't we do that as a separate motion?

Alderman Smith asked Kevin on a general night when there is a snow emergency how many cars are towed.

Mr. Sheppard answered we can tow anywhere from 250 to 350 or 375 cars.

Alderman Smith asked that is on an average snowstorm.

Mr. Sheppard answered yes.

Alderman Smith stated you picked out these two sites. Are they going to reflect...now I know there is hockey being played over at the West Side Arena and if there is a snowstorm how is that going to work? I don't know how Parks & Recreation is going to cope with it.

Mr. Sheppard responded like I said we typically start towing at 11 PM and stop at 6 AM. There may be a little bit of overlap late at night or first thing in the morning. I have talked to Ron Ludwig and we will work with Parks to discuss how this operation will actually work in that area.

Alderman Smith asked the figures that you presented to us, are they pretty accurate.

Mr. Dennis Anctil stated the original estimate of \$200,000 was based on a preliminary cost estimate for what it would take to do the larger lot at Derryfield. We kind of proportionately scaled that back for these other scenarios. It includes paving and gravel and fencing and lights, etc.

Alderman Smith stated if I am reading this right it is \$140,000 that you are looking for between the two.

Chairman O'Neil responded I believe Kevin stated earlier that that was an estimate and they need to take it to a further design.

Mr. Sheppard replied correct. There is \$200,000 approved. We don't think we will be using that total \$200,000. We would like to get a design further along and then we would have a better idea of the actual cost. We may be constructing some of this ourselves and, therefore, saving some money but we would prefer that the bond not be reduced.

Alderman Smith stated the only reason I am following along this line is it seems like every project we have is under estimated and we are looking for extra money and I want to have something concrete before I vote on it.

Mr. Sheppard stated we feel comfortable with...the \$200,000 obviously was allocated for this so we know we definitely won't be going over the \$200,000. Our estimates are usually pretty good and we won't be coming back asking for any money for this. Our concern is we need to start moving forward with this. If we

need to come back to the Committee to get approval on moving forward again it may just delay the start of construction.

Alderman Lopez stated on the West Side you are just going to use \$30,000 for the section that is highlighted in yellow. Is that correct?

Mr. Sheppard responded there are some trees that need to be taking down, striping of the lot and the asphalt. Dennis could probably give you further detail.

Mr. Anctil stated again it includes the pavement and gravel. The original estimate was based on the larger lot at Derryfield. We proportionately cut it down based on the number of spaces.

Alderman Lopez asked behind the West Side Arena have you looked into what you can do there as far as parking because they need a lot of parking back there.

Mr. Anctil answered there is some paved area back there right now. We are looking to expand that.

Alderman Lopez asked you are going to expand that area in that back.

Mr. Anctil answered yes. The area in yellow.

Alderman Lopez asked is that in the back of the arena.

Mr. Anctil answered yes that is the back of it.

Alderman Lopez asked so you are not going to be parking anything in the front then.

Mr. Anctil answered no.

On motion of Alderman Garrity moved to allow the Highway Department to move forward with construction of two impound lots – one at West Side Arena and one at Derryfield Park at a cost of up to \$200,000. Alderman Lopez duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Lopez asked why are we going to authorize spending of up to \$200,000 when the estimate is only \$130,000.

Chairman O'Neil answered they are saying that is a first estimate based on a cost per space. They need to take it to another level. It may be a little more than \$130,000. We have already approved the \$200,000. They are saying it is going to

be less than that. It could come back and cost them \$125,000 but that is only an estimate at this point.

Alderman Lopez stated you said that you were pretty sure of these prices.

Mr. Sheppard stated what I believe Dennis said is this is just an estimate based on the number of spaces. The approved amount from CIP that is in a start-up already and available to us is \$200,000. I am fairly comfortable with the estimate that Dennis has put together that the \$200,000 will not all be spent but before we take money away from this project I would like to have a better plan. We haven't done a survey on the West Side Ice Arena of that proposed parking expansion. We do have a good survey over at Derryfield Park. I would like to get a plan that is better put together before we take money out.

Alderman Lopez replied I can see that but I don't think you are going to be spending the \$200,000. Maybe \$140,000 or \$150,000 or whatever the case may be but up to \$200,000 if we can get some of that money back I am sure there are some other projects we can use it for.

Chairman O'Neil asked why don't we let it happen first. We have already approved the money. The start-up has already been approved for \$200,000. Let them do the project. I have trust in them that they are going to do it for much less than that but there is no need to handcuff them now on that.

Alderman Smith asked who did the estimate.

Mr. Sheppard answered Dennis.

Alderman Smith asked how many storms did we have where we had snow emergencies last year.

Mr. Sheppard answered I don't have that number but we don't necessarily tow during every snowstorm. Probably on the average of five to seven where we tow every year.

Alderman Smith asked and you are guaranteeing us right now that the \$200,000 is sufficient.

Chairman O'Neil called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Alderman Shea asked will you come back to us when the final figures are done and give us a report on that.

Mr. Sheppard answered I can do that and maybe after the construction we will have a good idea. We can't reallocate that money unless we come back to this Committee anyway.

Chairman O'Neil asked Alderman Garrity did you have another motion that you wanted to make regarding the Police Department.

Alderman Garrity answered I am not so sure we need to do that right now. Kevin, do we know what the cost is going to be for the bids?

Mr. Sheppard replied no. The Police need to go out for bid and they were waiting for us to determine what was going to happen.

Chairman O'Neil asked do we want them to at least notify us before they award the contract.

Alderman Garrity answered yes.

On motion of Alderman Garrity, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez it was voted to have the Police Department report to the Committee on Community Improvement before awarding the towing contract for the snow emergencies.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 6 of the agenda:

Discussion relative to additional funding of the "Hands Across the Merrimack" pedestrian bridge.

Chairman O'Neil stated I believe Mr. Thomas and Mr. MacKenzie are going to update us on this issue. I would like to point out that the Chair of the "Hands Across the Merrimack", Helen Closson, is here as well to answer any questions that we may have.

Mr. Frank Thomas stated to give you a brief update there was a preliminary design conducted on the bridge across the river by the firm of CLD as authorized in 2003. That preliminary engineering study was in the amount of about \$52,000. A preliminary report was prepared and submitted in March of this year. The report identified two alternatives with two different price tags to it. That report was submitted to the "Hands Across the Merrimack" committee and City staff to be reviewed. The recommendation was to move forward with what is called Alternative B, which is a scaled down version of what was originally being contemplated. The pedestrian bridge will still have the archway across the Everett Turnpike to give it the old flair of the Notre Dame Bridge. The bridge itself will

be the color black. There were some considerations of doing different types of treatments as far as cleaning the bridge and painting the bridge, however, one method was considerably more money and as a result the color will be black. Different scenarios were evaluated as far as the type of lighting that would go on the bridge. Again, the scaled back version was finally accepted. The project budget right now for the scaled down version, which will still be very, very nice...I mean I don't want to give the impression that we are going to get a piece of junk out there. It is going to be a very nice, aesthetically pleasing pedestrian bridge across the river. The project amount that I was heading towards is \$2.3 million. That budget amount includes engineering. What I am seeking tonight is authorization to move forward with the design phase, which is approximately \$125,000. What that will allow us to do over the next year is to refine the preliminary design into the final design drawings, refine the budgeting numbers because as you know steel and lumber have taken a tremendous impact and we don't want to say that this is a locked in number. That is why we want to take the next step and the next step is to do the final design with new budgeting numbers and then come back to the Committee with another presentation. I believe the funding is secure. I will let Mr. MacKenzie talk about that.

Mr. MacKenzie stated so far between both City funds and federal funds that have been granted towards this there is \$1.9 million of that \$2.3 million. The "Hands Across the Merrimack" committee has basically set a goal of roughly \$600,000 to raise. So \$400,000 of that goal is to complete the funding portion of that project to get up to the \$2.3 million. They also wanted to raise considerably money to set-up a trust fund for the long-term maintenance of the bridge. That is their goal. They have a good board and they are determined to raise that money. It is hard to raise money now but they certainly have the goal of not only the capital portion but money for maintenance of the project.

Chairman O'Neil stated I know that in a recent discussion with Mrs. Closson that there are a number of grants that they would like to apply for but in order to be successful they need to have this project in a final design so they can show the different trusts or whatever organizations they are going after for money exactly what it is going to be. I am supportive of moving forward at this point. I would open it up for any questions.

Alderman Garrity asked how many dollars have been raised privately so far.

Mr. MacKenzie answered I know that so far it has been on the order of about \$20,000...actually \$34,000.

Alderman Lopez stated along that same line could Mrs. Closson come forward and give us some background of how long they have been in existence...when I heard

at the meeting that they only had \$15,000 I was surprised. I am in favor of the design work but I would like to get a little history here.

Chairman O'Neil called Mrs. Helen Closson forward and asked her to give the Committee an overview of the "Hands Across the Merrimack" committee and your activities to date.

Mrs. Helen Closson stated we are a 401-C3. We are a "not for profit" corporation. We did incorporate and we have a very fine board. What we did is of course we presented our ideas to you a couple of years ago anyway. I am sure that some of you remember that and it was kind of a dream but one that we felt was really a doable thing so in the process we have continued to meet and look for grant money. We have gotten some people who have given some grants. As a matter of fact, the Pro-Con Foundation gave us \$10,000 and indicated that in the future if we were to proceed with this there would be more money from them. We are confident that there will be money. We have been speaking to a fundraising person and we are looking at two or three others. I am kind of adamant about raising endowment monies. I know how difficult it is for a City to continue to maintain certain facilities and I think this is a marvelous project and it will connect...I am French and my background is French and I love the idea of connecting with the West Side. I think is just a very important thing for us to be doing. I like the idea of that extra money but we are also looking at naming rights and it is something that would give us, I think, a substantial amount of money. In the final analysis with what we have now and what we are looking at I don't think it is a fundraising effort that is out of the realm of possibility. I have done a lot of fundraising in this community for many years and I know what it is like to look at a fundraising effort. We did a feasibility study because my feeling is that you have to go out to the community and see where that money is and what people are going to respond to. We had very good response. It was a couple of years ago and the market wasn't in very good shape. Everyone said they would contribute. Maybe not to the level they normally would but now that things are looking good again I think we have a very good chance of getting some of those people to come back on board. We are confident that we can raise that money. I think we have a structure together. We spoke to Mayor Baines and we understand that you don't raise that kind of money doing it yourself. You need someone's help and we could do that very easily. We are left with not...if we get naming rights, which would be a substantial amount of money and I am hoping we can do that we have a couple of ideas and if any of you have any suggestions let us know but I don't think the amount of money to be raised would be exorbitant. It is something that would be definitely doable. I think this is a community effort. I want to feel that everybody in this community feels that this is something that is for them to. I feel that way about it. I just had this dream about doing it because I think it is marvelous for this community. I was speaking to Alderman Roy earlier on and he

feels that it is an economic development thing as well. I think that if we possibly can go to the community and go to the kids in the schools I think we can mount a really important fun way to raise this money and everybody in the community...I don't care if they give \$1 or \$5 but that everyone participates in bringing "Hands Across the Merrimack" to them because if it becomes a reality it is going to be really a splendid idea to have...just think as you come into this community what a lovely way to come into Manchester to have this splendid bridge. I know that a couple of years ago I was in Montreal and we went across one of the bridges in the evening and it was lit and I said to my husband "Oh God that is my bridge" because it was just so beautiful to see that. It is really something that I think will enhance the community. This is not just a dream. I think it is a reality for the community and I really want to do this and I hope that we will have your support and I hope that everyone in town will feel that they need to have a piece of this action because it is a great thing to be doing.

Alderman Lopez asked Frank and Bob you talked about the \$125,000 for the design...

Mr. Thomas interjected \$125,000 to \$150,000.

Alderman Lopez stated along that line I know we had some discussion with the development down there to do this portion on this side of the bridge as to the handicapped and all of the accessories. I think both of you were at the meeting. Is that part of the design or is that separately on the handicapped portion on this side of the bridge?

Mr. MacKenzie responded I do know that I have had some discussions with Chinburg Builders. They are excited about this particular project and they did offer, although we have not been able to attach a dollar number to it, to at least do some of the groundwork and grading for the ramp that would be required off of the bridge connecting to the existing Riverwalk but I can't give you today what the price dollar amount is but they have expressed a willingness once they get under construction to help with that.

Alderman Lopez asked is that going to be a contribution from them.

Mr. MacKenzie answered yes. That would be a donation by them towards the project.

Mr. Thomas stated the design would be under the work that we are doing now both on the East Side and West Side of the project.

Alderman Smith stated I notice that you have been in existence, Helen, for about three or four years and you are just initiating fundraising now.

Mrs. Closson responded well it was a project that was slow in getting off the ground. We went to some of the...some of the foundations at the outset didn't feel as though we were really together enough to give us some money. Now they are looking at us in a much better light because this has become a viable project now. At that point in time we were really working. We alerted so many people to the project. I don't know how many places I go to where people ask me about my bridge. We have become a thing that the community is very aware of but at the beginning it was difficult because we had not gotten enough community support and maybe the Board of Mayor and Aldermen wasn't quite ready...I know the Mayor has always been on board and I know that several of the Aldermen have been as well but until we became more of an entity that was viable I don't think that they were so willing to jump in and give us some money. Now we are at the point where we can go to these people and say this is a go now, this is something that we see as a real possibility. I am sure that we will get some support from them now.

Alderman Smith asked, Frank, the initial phase of construction is for 2005 or is this outdated now. It says that construction will start in 2005.

Mr. Thomas answered no it won't be in 2005. We are looking at doing the design over this season and unless everything does come together we are probably looking at later in 2005 or early 2006.

Mrs. Closson stated if our fundraising effort gets underway, which we hope it will after the first of the year, then we would have enough money and I think that would make a difference in the timeframe.

Alderman Smith responded that is what I was getting to. It will give you more time for fundraising and if everybody can see that it is starting...I notice that it says the construction will end in 2006 but it might be 2007.

Chairman O'Neil asked Frank am I correct to say that the timeline is going to be determined by the private fundraising.

Mr. Thomas answered I think that is going to take a major role in when we are going to be able to put it out to bid. Again, we are looking at forward. I agree with Helen 100%. I am not on her committee but things did start of slow. We didn't have a full commitment on the part of the City to fund the project. We do have more funds now. We have a preliminary design that the committee has evaluated so it is not like we are rushing into something. Moving forward with the

final design I think again will allow pocketbooks to open and the fundraising efforts to move forward quickly. Again to answer Alderman Smith's specific question, this project is funding dependent and if we move forward with the design and the budgeting estimates are still good and the fundraising efforts materialize we can move forward with the project a little bit faster. Now on the other side of the coin if we get impacted by the price of construction materials like steel and whatnot and the price of the project goes up then the project funding is going to have to be adjusted.

Alderman Shea stated your last statement concerns me which was if the cost of steel and lumber goes up somehow or another there is going to have to be an adjustment and that is really what happens. As I mentioned at the Aldermanic meeting we begin projects all well and good. These projects are directed by civic minded people who have the best interest at heart but for whatever reason we begin these projects and then similar to the citizens who are trying to build their own senior center, we have to contribute as taxpayers to fund that. I think this is where the rub is.

Mr. Thomas responded I think the difference here is that we are not going to go ahead with any construction until we have the full dollar amount. That is why I am saying...we are approaching this in a logical fashion. We have done a preliminary design and we are going into a final design with budgeted numbers. We are not going to break ground until we have an exact cost for this project.

Alderman Shea replied but you did bring up under the design phase the \$125,000, the price of steel and the price of lumber could impact that particular...

Mr. Thomas interjected not the design phase. The escalating prices of the materials could affect the ultimate construction cost.

Alderman Shea stated what I am trying to indicate here is that once we begin a process it is almost impossible to turn back because we start so many community projects and as a result of the thrust to go forward we get stuck at a certain point, whether it is 80% of the project or 60% and then we say we have to get this done by X number of days or months or years in order for us as a community to fulfill the obligation that we initially began and that is where my concern rests and that is where it is. So many times this has come back to roost as far as I am concerned since I have been on the Board. That is where my major concern is. Are we moving too fast in this project in order to take advantage of other types of things that have been indicated like grants, etc. and, therefore, when these grants and so forth aren't forthcoming at the time that they are expected to be forthcoming, somehow or another the community has to pay the bill for that particular project.

Chairman O'Neil responded on that point my understanding is that all you are looking for, Frank, is authorization to move forward on the design phase and that the design of this project is important for the "Hands Across the Merrimack" group to do some private fundraising. There is no commitment at this point at this time until all funds are brought forward, including the private fundraising to move forward on construction. There will be another vote on that before we move forward on construction.

Mr. Thomas replied that is correct and again we are moving slowly on this project. We are doing this meticulously. We are taking very small steps and not making any major commitments until we have everything on the table but in order to move forward we have to go into the final design phase. Once that design is completed, that project could be built the following year or ten years from now. The design will stay good.

Chairman O'Neil asked so we are not committing to construct this project tonight.

Mr. Thomas answered that is correct.

Mrs. Closson stated I wanted to respond to Alderman Shea's comments. We will have those figures in place and when we are looking at our fundraising efforts we will take that into consideration. Those are the numbers that we are going to look at in addition to what we have to raise those monies so that we are not expecting the City to pick up...that will be private donations to pick up that difference. I don't think that that is an issue that you have worry about.

Alderman Shea stated in other words what you are indicating is once the \$125,000 is forthcoming nothing else will be done on this project until your fundraising is completed to the tune of at least \$400,000 if it is \$2.4 million that it costs or \$600,000.

Mrs. Closson responded whatever the figures dictate. We will have to know what those final figures are but we need this design so that we can go out and raise some of the monies. You see these people...

Alderman Shea interjected I am not talking about that part.

Mrs. Closson stated we will address the issues of the numbers that are needed and that is what our fundraising effort will be based on so that is not City money that we are going to be looking for. Those will be private donations. We have already consulted with one fundraising person and are looking at two or three others because Mayor Baines had asked us to look at that so we can really get on with it. I don't want it built in 10 years. I want it built soon.

Alderman Shea replied well we all would like to see it come to fruition according to the way we would like it to but one of the problems that we have had in the past and I am being repetitious is...

Mrs. Closson interjected I understand what you are saying.

Alderman Shea stated we have always tried to do things that way but somehow or other things fall off the wagon and we have to pick it up with taxpayer's money.

Mrs. Closson responded that should not be an issue with this project.

Chairman O'Neil stated if you recall, Alderman Shea, as we went through the CIP budget process this year and this really doesn't necessarily affect this project but we asked the larger projects that once they go through design to come back to this Committee to confirm the construction numbers for that very reason and that is a similar process that is going to happen here.

Alderman Lopez moved to authorize up to \$150,000 for design work on the "Hands Across the Merrimack" bridge. Alderman Smith duly seconded the motion. Chairman O'Neil called for a vote. The motion carried with Alderman Shea being duly recorded in opposition.

Alderman Lopez stated while you are there I know we got vetoed on the votes for the senior center but Mr. MacKenzie I know you are aware of it and maybe you can explain that we don't need that money so the Committee realizes that.

Mr. Thomas responded let me speak on the construction and the funding that is in place. The funding that has been allocated to date by the City is enough to complete that project with all of the desired amenities for November. Now it is my understanding that the fundraising efforts are a little bit short but you have already funded...Mr. MacKenzie do you want to take over.

Mr. MacKenzie stated the Board approved that the project go ahead with a fundraising goal of \$500,000. To date I know that of that \$500,000 there has been over \$280,000 committed or actually paid. The project itself is actually doing very well. Today the project should come in on time and on budget so the money allocated does include that \$500,000 of anticipated fundraising. If it comes in less that means that there will be less money needed to fundraise.

Alderman Lopez stated the point I want to make just so we are clear is that all of the money is in place for everything at the West Side Senior Center or the City Senior Center period. The fundraising issue is a different issue.

Mr. MacKenzie responded correct.

Alderman Shea stated maybe you could clarify this. Didn't we approve an extra \$300,000 at a CIP meeting to complete the situation over at the senior center or am I mistaken.

Mr. MacKenzie responded the Board did discuss that but there was never any action taken to do that. There was discussion at the Board to take \$200,000 and then there was discussion of \$300,000 from the "Hands Across the Merrimack" bridge and move it to the senior center but there was no action taken to do that.

Chairman O'Neil stated right that was the vote that the Mayor vetoed at the full Board level. You are both confident that this project is in good shape?

Mr. Thomas replied yes I am very confident.

Alderman Shea stated my point is that you don't need that \$300,000 to complete...

Mr. MacKenzie interjected we learned today from the Highway Department representatives that the project is on schedule and the Board does not need to take any more actions to get it done.

Alderman Shea asked so that \$300,000 that we initially wanted to take from the project in question here we don't need and the project will be completed as is without that \$300,000.

Mr. Thomas answered that is correct.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 7 of the agenda:

#### Discussion of Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Master Plan.

Chairman O'Neil stated this is on the agenda because of me. Parks has gone out on RFQ's for consultants but during the budget process I had spoken a number of times with Mr. MacKenzie as well as the Mayor that I had some concerns that \$45,000 was going to be adequate to give us a detailed Parks Master Plan as we need. I do have a concern. I have spoken to the Parks staff about this that I hate to award a contract when there is a possibility that there may be a recommendation to add more money. The consultants need to know what the true number is to work on if you follow me. We are committed to Parks projects for the next two years so this Master Plan is not going to help us in the next two years. I am suggesting that we put the brakes on this. I spoke with the Mayor yesterday, as well as Bob

MacKenzie. Bob is working to see if there might be some additional funds so that we can commit more money to this Parks Master Plan. I think it is a very important project and I think we need to not shortchange the project. It was a number that fit at the time but Bob do you want to say something.

Mr. MacKenzie stated it is kind of hard to tell what this type of project will cost. Originally they requested at least \$50,000. In the CIP program though there was only \$45,000 available. It is eligible for CDBG, which means that future funding of CDBG could be used or even program income. If we get unanticipated program income from CDBG programs that could also be used. It is a project that could take...it could be anywhere from \$40,000 to \$80,000.

Chairman O'Neil stated my point is that we are going to get what we pay for. If we have a lower amount that is what we are going to get. We are going to get a cheaper study and in my opinion one that won't give us the complete details that we need to, as we do at the Airport and with our Water System and our Waste Water System and our bridges get a document back that is going to give us...one that is going to be a good planning document that prioritizes the needs. In all honesty the Board reacts to issues during the budget year. That is how our Parks system is constructed. I don't believe that is the best way to do it. We still have shortage of park space for some sports throughout the City and we might have a surplus of others and that is what I think this study would need to do. We need a needs assessment and a condition assessment of our parks and then make a recommendation not only to the department but to the City on some direction moving forward. That is why I am asking that we kind of put the project on hold at this time.

Alderman Shea stated I would like to hear from Ron Johnson or Ron Ludwig as to what their thoughts might be on the matter.

Mr. Ron Johnson stated as Alderman O'Neil explained we have done the first step in the process. The money was appropriated in this year's CIP. We had a request for qualifications. Those were received last Friday. We had 14 firms submit their qualification statements and essentially what that is is it just explains a little bit about their firm. What we were looking for was firms that had done park planning and master planning work. We will review those. I have since worked on a more detailed Request for Proposal, which I forwarded to Alderman O'Neil that outlines the various steps. We are following a model that was developed by the National Parks Service, which makes us eligible for funding from the UPAR program and it would do the detailed assessment looking at all of the facilities. We have about 75 facilities in the City. So that has been developed. The RFP has been developed and we would not send that out. We were planning to send it out in the next couple of weeks to try and have it due in September. We haven't stated a dollar

amount. The consultants would then come back to us with a fee proposed based on that so we would have an idea after those are received back on how much the proposal would cost. I think what we could do is review the RFP with the Planning Department to see if there are some additional items that they want to include. Ten years ago or a little more than 10 years ago when this was done it was used as a follow-up to...the Recovery Action Plan was then used by the Planning Department to update the overall City Master Plan.

Alderman Shea asked would you state what the positive aspect would be of having a Master Plan and also any kind of negation. In other words, what I am looking for is it a wise move to put it off or is it not in your judgement.

Mr. Johnson answered I would defer to the Planning Department. They are in the process of updating the overall City Master Plan, which they try to do every 10 years. I think it has been 12 or more now since the last once was done. The way we developed it it gives us a five-year planning tool. As part of that Master Plan they will look at what we could do for rehabilitation of parks, where additional park land should be purchased and that was all entailed in the last report. It also would make us eligible, by updating this, for Federal dollars although I should mention that right now the UPAR program has not been funded at the Federal level but if the dollars did come forward we would have to have this plan in place and recertified.

Alderman Shea asked so if we were to put it off what does that do in terms of your department. In other words when Bob MacKenzie is going to have the Master Plan for the City...can you wait that long? Is it important that you be part of that? Are we going to lose something because you are not updating your plan? This is what I am trying to get across.

Mr. Johnson stated the reason this came about is we were asked to update the plan this past year. That is why it was included in the CIP.

Alderman Shea asked so when would we update the plan if not under the present guise. In other words if we don't allocate the \$45,000 this year when will we start updating your Master Plan?

Chairman O'Neil replied my thoughts are that we would just generally let the summer settle down a little bit and then in the fall take a look and give the City staff a chance to try to identify some money. My intent is not to put this off for another year. It is just to delay it to give us a chance to see if we can find some more money. The more money we put into this plan the better quality product we are going to get back. The first thing I am sure the consultants do is go on the website of the City and see what the CIP budget is and they see there is a dollar

amount of \$45,000 and that is what they are going to structure their proposals around. They are not going to give us a \$90,000 proposal for only \$45,000.

Alderman Shea asked but if, for instance, we want to spend \$80,000 on a Park Master Plan are we going to allocate another...

Chairman O'Neil interjected if there is some funding available. I am speaking for myself. I think a Parks Master Plan is critical to us moving forward. We are not keeping up with the needs of the community regarding sports. Lacrosse and field hockey for instance are having problems finding fields to play on. The condition of our fields is not that great to be honest with you. What I think in looking at how the City has used quality master plans at the Airport moving forward and they used master plans with the Water Works on what sections of the City they are going to replace pipe and what sections they are going to reline. Highway uses the same plans for the parking garages and our bridges and the sewer system. These are not uncommon and they layout what your next steps are going to be. Highway knows what the next sewer project is going to be in the City.

Alderman Lopez stated I have a couple of comments. I know that Parks did a plan that was included in Mr. MacKenzie's 10-year plan and they probably accomplished 90% or more than that in the 10-year plan that they had. I also know that we had an individual when I was a Commissioner that we hired to go through every park and tell you how long it takes to cut the grass and how long it takes to do this and that. In all cases you need more people. You need more maintenance people in order to do it. That is the end result. I don't need a consultant to tell me that you need another 10 people doing maintenance and you have to put more money into it in order to do maintenance. I sat it on a meeting previously with the Lands and Buildings Committee on a dam over on the West Side that they want to tear down because the money is there to tear it down because we haven't had any maintenance money over a number of years. I agree with what you are saying. How many parks do we need in the City of Manchester? If you look at the history of the City of Manchester the biggest trouble that we have when it comes to parks is when the snow goes away until September. Everybody wants to be outdoors. After September everything will get quiet and they will do their planning for next year and the ice arenas will take over. I don't know...the plan that we are speaking of we hired an individual...what is his title that works with you upstairs, Ron?

Mr. Johnson answered Park Planner.

Alderman Lopez stated we hired an individual to be a Park Planner for the simple reason that we didn't want to go out and do consulting. They have done a tremendous job and any project that we have given them they have sat down with

the neighbors and have worked out a plan. They worked out Livingston and Livingston didn't just happen in one year. Parks & Recreation did that. I don't know what we are waiting for. Mr. MacKenzie, when do you have to submit something where you need Parks to be part of your system?

Mr. MacKenzie responded for the Community Master Plan it would be very useful to have the Parks Master Plan a part of that but that is going to be a fairly long process. That will be a two-year cycle because there is a lot of community input that we will get. Probably in the middle of 2007 is when we will have to have it done, which means it will be useful to have that information by the end of next year. Certainly we would hope that it would fit into that but I think this process might be a six-month process so hopefully those two will dovetail. I am not sure if a month delay is going to do anything to that process but certainly sooner than later we would like to see it done.

Alderman Lopez stated I am just trying to figure out...when you did your last plan you used an in-house plan in order to put together your complete document on all of the parks in the City of Manchester and what we were going to do as a five year plan and it worked pretty good. Are we saying that the Parks Department cannot do that plan? That is what I am having a hard time with because I was there for 18 years and I know the type of work that they do.

Mr. MacKenzie responded I am not sure if I am in a good position to say that. Sometimes in order to complete a document it is useful to have some consultant assistance just because the staff is so out straight actually doing projects that it is hard to take the time to go out and evaluate and do a plan. I would probably defer to Ron Johnson on that.

Mr. Johnson stated the last time we followed the same process. We did the Recovery Action Plan, which is following the same model. It was then used by the Planning Department. I think they then augmented our information and data with some other consultant just to incorporate it into the Community Master Plan that Bob referred to. I think the number of meetings we are looking to do – four outreach community meetings and having someone go to every park to evaluate...one of the other opportunities that we have spoken with the Planning Department on is having possibly an Americorps person or Vista person help us with the data collection. They have a few throughout the City and that might be an opportunity to have someone do a lot of the legwork for the planning and the community meetings.

Alderman Lopez asked so Mr. Chairman are you saying you want to wait for another \$50,000.

Chairman O'Neil replied my suggestion is that we just put it on hold for a couple of months, see if the CIP staff can identify any additional funding sources and if they can't we move forward with the \$45,000. If they can, I believe that the more money we commit to this the better quality product we are going to get back. \$45,000 into 75 parks is not a lot of money and I truly believe we need a document that is going to help this Board moving forward with where we commit our park funds because we are doing a good job of committing our park funds and doing park improvements but I am just not 100% sure we are keeping up with the needs of the community today based on...you know things have changed. Are there more or less football teams than 10 years ago? We know that lacrosse is a new sport. We know that field hockey is a new sport. Maybe we have too many softball fields. That is the type of thing. In my opinion and I think Parks put this in the qualifications they have to do site assessments and also needs assessments of the community. Am I correct, Ron? What are the needs of the community today? It would be great to say that Ron could do that but he doesn't have the time to do that. He doesn't have the staff to do that. I am saying two or three months and if we don't come up with any additional money we move forward with it.

Alderman Lopez stated I will go along with that. I just want everybody to realize that once this whole project is done the biggest thing you are going to see is that more money, maintenance and people are needed. There have been three reports that I have seen as a Commissioner.

Alderman Shea asked Ron by putting this off for say two months does that throw any problems into the situation that you are involved with now.

Mr. Johnson answered no. I think we can inform the consultants that contacted us...we will just send them a letter saying that we are going to be reviewing their qualification statements and will be back to them in a few months.

Alderman Shea moved to table the Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Master Plan until October. Alderman Garrity duly seconded the motion. Chairman O'Neil called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

### **TABLED ITEMS**

#### **8. Derryfield Park Rehabilitation Phase II.**

This item remained on the table.

Synthetic turf maintenance at Gill Stadium, West Memorial Field, and the

Clem Lemire Sports Complex at Memorial High School and a list of additional capital items needed to properly operate Gill Stadium.

On motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Garrity it was voted to remove this item from the table.

Alderman Smith stated I don't know if many of you have been down to Memorial High School but I am very pleased with the work that has been done. I don't know if you have looked at the bleachers and so forth but what I am really trying to get at is the Gill Stadium punchlist and so forth in regards to field maintenance. I know this has been brought up and I know there are additional costs and I happened to...a brochure was given to me by John Gavin at Boston College. It just so happens that I am a season ticket holder at Boston College and they just converted their football field to FieldTurf, which is the same company that did Memorial High School. I believe and I am sure Ron Ludwig and others agree that we have to train our employees so they do quality work. I am somewhat dismayed at the condition of Gill Stadium as it stands now. I don't know what the reason is. Everybody says it was put down satisfactorily but we are still getting the crumb rubber up on everything hit. They said it takes awhile. It has been six months now. I believe fully that if we are going to do this we have to give Parks & Recreation the equipment and the money to do it right. We spent money on a field and they are only asking for roughly \$92,353 for the equipment that they think they will need to keep up Gill Stadium and Memorial High School. My only question is that when I talked to another individual from another company he was questioning the availability of the machine down at Memorial High School, the super groomer and whether it could be utilized at Gill Stadium. Now apparently it can and I hope it can because that saves money but what I am saying is from what he said it wasn't adaptable to Gill Stadium and West Memorial and John Huard from FieldTurf says it is adaptable. Did anybody find an answer?

Chairman O'Neil asked Ron do you know. I would like to point out that at the last meeting we asked the department to prioritize the list for Gill Stadium. Everybody should have a copy of that. To date I still don't know how we are going to fund it. The department was supposed to be working with Finance to come up...we put it in the Enterprise but there aren't any Enterprise funds for it so we still have to figure out how we are going to pay for it but the department did prioritize based on whatever dollar amount we approve what pieces of equipment or service contracts they would enter into with the field lighting being the number one priority. Ron, regarding Alderman Smith's question about use of the groomer at Memorial on Gill or West High what do you know?

Mr. Ron Ludwig, Director, Parks, Recreation & Cemetery stated again we understood that there was some difference of opinion even amongst ourselves

right here in terms of whether this piece of equipment was interchangeable. At this point the pendulum swung that way. We think it is interchangeable. We don't have it on-site yet at the Memorial project. It should be coming in as a part of their punchlist down there in the next two or three weeks. We will have it. We have seen cut sheets on it. We have talked to John Huard, Jr. who is fairly knowledgeable on FieldTurf fields and he feels very strongly that it would be usable between Gill Stadium and West.

Chairman O'Neil asked at Memorial do we have the utility vehicle to pull the groomer or would we use the one that we purchased at Gill at Memorial as well or at West.

Mr. Ludwig answered right now the department has nothing.

Chairman O'Neil asked so if I may what we are really looking at by approving money for Gill is the ability to also use that equipment at West...the Gator Utility Vehicle possibly and the Balloon Tired Tractor...all of that could be used at any one of the three sites.

Mr. Ludwig answered absolutely.

Chairman O'Neil asked can somebody make a motion about...we have to force this issue about identifying the money somehow through the Enterprise system. I was hoping that we would get an answer from Finance on it. Can we get a motion to get an answer on that?

Alderman Shea moved to have Finance work with Parks & Recreation and CIP on possible funding for the equipment needed for Gill Stadium and report back to the Committee. Alderman Lopez duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Lopez asked this \$86,000 that you need, now you are not going to take the money out of the Enterprise funds that you have.

Mr. Ludwig answered in the case of Gill Stadium we know that we only charge actual expenses. We take in no revenue. If we were to bond this or even if...these may not be bondable items. These are probably just capital improvement items. It would have an impact on the Enterprise fund, which is not in the greatest of condition in the first place.

Alderman Lopez asked do you have \$86,000 in the Enterprise right now. Gill Stadium is still in the Enterprise.

Chairman O'Neil stated it would have to be non-bonding. Do you have \$86,000 cash in the Enterprise?

Mr. Ludwig answered not really, not for capital improvements. We wouldn't be charging it off to the School District. It would be a direct hit on the expense side.

Chairman O'Neil stated we really need to find an outside source somehow to do this.

Mr. Ludwig responded we have to raise fees or cut people and expenses.

Chairman O'Neil replied and none of those to be honest with you make any sense. I thought we had asked Finance to look at this issue at the last meeting but to be honest with you I haven't seen any response from them. We made a motion to ask Finance again to work with Parks and the CIP staff on this issue. We need to address this by the meeting in September.

Mr. Ludwig stated it is essential. I have learned from the Fisher Cats that they may be in the ballpark until the 19<sup>th</sup> or the 18<sup>th</sup>. That is the drop-dead date.

Chairman O'Neil stated well we need to address this issue. I don't know how but we need to address it.

Alderman Lopez stated why don't we amend the motion and say we want an answer in a week.

Chairman O'Neil responded why don't we give them two weeks.

Alderman Shea amended his motion to have a report back to the Committee in two weeks. Alderman Lopez duly seconded the amendment.

Alderman Smith stated I think the real figure is \$92,353 if you are going to utilize the professional who paints the football fields and so forth and I believe if you are going to do it right, do it right the first time and you can probably have your employees watch the procedure and they can be trained at the same time.

Mr. Ludwig responded I totally agree Alderman Smith and I think with the urgency to change over the Fisher Cats are indicating they need seven day beyond their last play-off game to vacate the facility. We are going to have probably a couple of weeks. There is a good possibility that we won't play a football game or a soccer game at Gill until the first of October under the present conditions.

Chairman O'Neil asked so Alderman Smith you think the correct number should be not \$86,000 but \$92,000.

Alderman Smith answered \$92,353.

Chairman O'Neil stated why don't we make it \$93,000 and ask them to identify that and get back to us within two weeks. I will call for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman O'Neil stated I have one item of new business, which you all should have in front of you. It is a CIP budget authorization and resolution for acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$25,000 (Other) for FY2003 CIP 713303 South Willow Street Area Improvements.

Mr. MacKenzie stated this is just to accept a contribution from Dobles Chevrolet to help improvements at South Porter.

On motion of Alderman Garrity, duly seconded by Alderman Shea it was voted to approve the resolution and budget authorization.

There being no further business, on motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Shea it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee